

Amendments to the Specification:

Please add the following new paragraph on Page 1, above line 1:

--CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

Applicants claim priority under 35 U.S.C. §119 of German Application No. 102 61 175.0 filed December 20, 2002. Applicants also claim priority under 35 U.S.C. §365 of PCT/EP2003/012936 filed November 19, 2003. The international application under PCT article 21(2) was not published in English.--

Page 2, after line 10, insert the following paragraphs:

-- From EP 0 713 967 A1, an inward-opening injection nozzle is known, likewise having two rows of nozzle bores, which are made in the nozzle body and can be connected to the fuel pressure system through a coaxially disposed sliding sleeve, via a corresponding end-face blind hole and radially running fuel ducts. The sliding sleeve is a thick-walled, cylindrical component, which is precisely fitted in an axially displaceable manner in the nozzle body.

From DE 41 19 402 A1, a sliding valve is known, in which a sliding sleeve is disposed in an axially displaceable manner in a control cylinder. The sliding sleeve possesses, in the end face facing toward a pressure medium inlet of the control cylinder, a blind hole, from which radially running pressure medium ducts radiate. These emerge on control faces on the periphery of the sliding sleeve and establish a connection between the pressure medium input and working lines or a return circuit, according to the position of the sliding sleeve. The sliding sleeve consists of an elastically deformable material, so that the control faces on the sliding sleeve are radially elastically flexible in the direction of the control cylinder. They are hence able to tightly close off the control openings in the closed state, without the high production cost of tight fits. In this context, it is advantageous that the control faces bear against the control cylinder under a predetermined preload, or are forced against the control cylinder by the pressure of a controlled medium, a gas or a liquid. Since the contact pressure rises with increasing medium pressure, the sliding valve forms a secure seal even when the medium pressures are high.--

Same page, please delete the first full paragraph ("From DE...seat faces").

Same page, after the second full paragraph, please insert
the following paragraph:

--According to the invention, the sliding sleeve has in the region of the control face at least one longitudinal slot, so that the control face can yield in the radial direction. If a plurality of control faces, distributed over the periphery, are assigned to a plurality of control openings, a corresponding number of longitudinal slots are provided, which form between them spring tongues, on which the control faces are disposed. If the longitudinal slots are extended up to the end face of the sliding sleeve, it is advantageous to dispose the control faces at the end of the spring tongues which are thus formed. The geometric shaping of the spring tongues enables their spring characteristics to be influenced and to be tailored to the particular application.

Same page, please delete the third full paragraph
("According...are high.")

On Page 5, amend the first paragraph as follows:

--A sliding valve 10 in the form of a fuel injection valve for an internal combustion engine possesses a valve housing 11,

in which a sliding sleeve 12 is guided in a control cylinder 13 such that it is axially displaceable in the motional direction 29. The sliding sleeve 12 is connected by a cross pin 15, which is inserted in a transverse bore 16 in the sliding sleeve 12, to a valve rod 14. The latter is actuated by an actuator system (not represented in greater detail), e.g. by an electromagnet. ~~The sliding sleeve 12 and its upper part 27 can be made here of magnetic material and can be configured as a magnet armature.~~ --